



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

June 3, 2011

Dear School Official:

I am pleased to announce the release of the official comprehensive School Certifying Official Handbook. It is the product of a collaboration of the four Regional Processing Offices and Education Service. The handbook has been updated to include information on the changes due to the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010 and is intended to be the official source of information for School Certifying Officials. The handbook can be accessed, downloaded, and/or printed from the School Certifying Officials page of the GI Bill Website at [http://gibill.va.gov/documents/job_aids/SCO Handbook_v1.pdf](http://gibill.va.gov/documents/job_aids/SCO_Handbook_v1.pdf).

The purpose of this guide is to enhance the consistency of information available to all school officials, State Approving Agencies, VA staff, and others involved with administering veterans benefits on campus. Many people are involved in this process and they all play a critical role. A successful veteran program will always be based on active, open, and clear communications between SCOs, finance offices, bursars offices, and all others involved with veterans issues on campus.

This guide is not intended to reduce communications between entities. For example, the VA Education Liaison Representatives are the key VA person (on the ground). That role will not change. This guide, however, should enhance that role by ensuring consistency of information to and from all parties. This guide supercedes any locally produced VA material covering the same topic. Additionally, future locally produced material will require VA Education approval before being provided by an ELR to schools in their state(s).

Please recognize this is the first version of this important document. It is likely to need modification as we learn more, identify areas to clarify, or simply correct typos and mistakes.

The SCO Guide also supports VA's need for more information so we can more actively support our veterans and ensure their graduation and ultimate employment. As you will see, there are additional reporting requirements. While we recognize this may mean additional work for stakeholders and VA, this information is vital to demonstrating the good we are all doing to support our veterans.

We look forward to working with you to improve the SCO guide.

Additional Reporting Requirements

School Certifying Officials will now be required to report the following information to VA:


- 1) Graduation (for degree programs) or course completion (non-degree programs) for all students by submitting a Notice of Change in Student Status (VA form 22-1999b) or electronic equivalent (page 68 in the Handbook); and
- 2) Notification when a student is placed on academic probation by electronic submission through VA's Internet Inquiry System (page 65 in the Handbook).

Additional Resources and Training

Additional information and resources are available on the School Certifying Officials page of the GI Bill Website at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/school-certifying-officials>. These resources include Fact Sheets, Frequently Asked Questions, and an online School Certifying Official training course. Education Service is also in the process of developing training videos for School Certifying Officials which will also be posted to our website. You will be receive additional notification when the videos have been released.

I hope that this information will assist you in performing your duties as a School Certifying Official. If you have additional questions regarding how to certify a student's enrollment, you should contact your VA Education Liaison Representative (ELR). Contact information for your ELR can be found on our website at <http://gibill.va.gov/school-certifying-officials/elr.html>.

Sincerely,



KEITH M. WILSON
Director
Education Service